



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

Family Investment Administration
ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number:

#11-20

Effective Date: January 1, 2011

Issuance Date: UPON RECEIPT

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

FROM: ROSEMARY MALONE, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**RE: ALIGNING CERTIFICATION PERIODS FOR FOOD SUPPLEMENT AND
TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE WHEN THE TRANSITIONAL FOOD
SUPPLEMENT (TFS) FREEZE IS BROKEN**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM (FSP) and
TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE (TCA)**

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY:

Action Transmittal 11-14, "Transitional Food Supplement Benefit Change" provided information on the change in the Transitional Food Supplement (TFS) policy regarding households that return to TCA during the five month TFS period. Effective January 1, 2011 households returning to TCA during the five month TFS period are recertified for Food Supplement Program (FSP) benefits under normal FSP requirements and a new certification period is assigned. This includes all TCA cases reopened for any reason (an Agency error closure, TCA reopened pending an appeal, or the customer reapplies) during the five month TFS period. Wait until the TCA case has been approved to break the TFS freeze and complete a recertification of the FSP case.

Upon reopening, the TCA case is assigned a 12 month certification period. In most instances when the TFS freeze is broken, the household is recertified and given new six month certification period. The certification periods for the TCA and FSP may not be aligned. When certification periods are not aligned, the customer must be seen more often than necessary, resulting in poor customer service and an increase in agency workload. The Food and Nutrition Service approved a waiver to allow us to align the certifications by completing an early recertification of the FSP case.

REQUIRED ACTION:

When a TFS household returns to TCA during the five month TFS period, the freeze must be broken and they must be recertified for FSP under normal FSP rules. Assign the FSP case a six month certification period. The first FSP recertification (after the freeze is broken) will be

a mail-in. If the household completes the recertification and remains eligible, recertify the FSP case for six additional months. When the TCA case is recertified complete an early recertification of the FSP case. If the household remains eligible for TCA and FSP, assign another 12-month certification to the TCA case and a six month certification to the FSP case. Completing the early recertification of the FSP will align the certification periods. See chart on page three for further clarification.

EXAMPLE:

Ms. Potts' TCA case was closed effective March 1 because her income was overscale. Her FSP benefits went into TFS effective March 1. The TFS period was March through July. Ms. Potts lost her job and reapplied for TCA on May 5. Her TCA was approved on May 17 and she was given a 12-month certification period, May through April. When the TCA case was approved the case manager recertified the household for FSP and broke the TFS freeze. The new FSP certification period is 6 months, June through November. In October Ms. Potts completes the FSP recertification and is recertified 6 more months, December through May. When Ms. Potts completes her TCA recertification in March the case manager also completes an early recertification of the FSP case. If Ms. Potts is eligible the case manager assigns a new 6-month certification period. At this point Ms. Potts' TCA and FSP certification periods will be aligned.

ACTION DUE:

Upon Receipt

INQUIRIES:

Please direct TCA policy questions to Marilyn Lorenzo at 410-767-7333 or mlorenzo@dhr.state.md.us, Gretchen Simpson at 410-767-7937 or gsimpson@dhr.state.md.us or Mary Ellen Scalley 410-767-7953 or mscalley@dhr.state.md.us.

cc: DHR Executive Staff
FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk

**ALIGNING CERTIFICATION PERIODS FOR
FSP AND TCA
WHEN THE TFS FREEZE IS BROKEN**

Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
FSP TCA	TCA FSP	TFS	TFS	TFS TCA reopened 12-month certification May – April	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA Mail-in recertification for FSP received. FSP recertified 6- months. New FSP certification period Dec. - May	FSP TCA
	TCA closed March 1 FSP goes into TFS effective March - July			Recertified FSP TFS freeze broken effective June. FSP certified 6 months June – Nov.							

Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA	FSP TCA FSP recertified New certification period Nov. – April	FSP TCA	FSP TCA
			Recertified TCA and completed early FSP recertification New certification periods: TCA: May-April FSP: May-Oct.								